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son, for instance, with Professor Findlay's similar excellent work on the Pauline epistles.

C. W. V.

The Drama of the Apocalypse, in Relation to the Literary and Political Circumstances of its Time. By REV. FREDERIC PALMER, D.D. New York: The Macmillan Co., 1903. Pp. 192. \$1.25, *net*.

The time is at hand for the production of a thoroughly good work on the book of Revelation. The special study of the Jewish apocalyptic writings has prepared the way for a satisfactory interpretation of the New Testament Apocalypse. Undoubtedly many detailed problems still exist, and the literary relations of this book to previous Jewish and Christian apocalypses are not fully determined. But the principles of interpreting the book can now be defined. People, too, are more than anxious for such an interpretation. The book has been greatly neglected by sensible people because of the fanciful interpretations which have been given the book by men of a peculiar type of mind. The book of Revelation, in fact, is a very earnest and useful message for us, when once this message is rightly discerned. But, as in the case of all the other New Testament books, the Apocalypse was meant first of all for its own time, and has to be understood in its own time before its message for any other time can be determined. The Apocalypse, more than any other New Testament book, has its meaning in the first century where it arose.

Dr. Palmer has presented clearly the general purpose of the book and its relation to the history and the literature of its period. He does not go into the elaborate discussions of literary origins, but leaves the author of the book free to make such use of previous existing material as he wished. The date of the book he conceives to be "the latter half of the year 68 A. D." This is in accordance with an opinion which had taken a strong hold of the scholarly world during the past generation. The author does not note the fact that there was a very sharp return on the part of many scholars to the traditional date for the book in the last decade of the first century. This later date for the book as a whole is, however, held in conjunction with a view that portions of the book had their origin at an earlier time. The portion which so clearly pertains to the Emperor Nero and the closing years of his reign quite surely arose about 68 A. D., but the date of that material does not determine the date of the whole book.

Dr. Palmer's main purpose, however, is to show the dramatic character of the book. He holds it to be a unit in its presentation and divides the material into five acts, as follows: Act I (chaps. 4-8), the Opening of the Seals of Fate; Act II (chaps. 8-12), the Blowing of the Trumpets of Woe; Act III (chaps. 12-14), the Establishment of the Kingdom and its Results; Act IV (chaps. 15-19), the Judgment of the Earth and of Rome; Act V (chaps. 19-22), the Marriage of the Prince of Heaven, and the Glory of the Kingdom. The first three chapters form an introduction to the drama. The entire text of the book in the language of the Revised Version is presented, and the several acts are described as to their general content and their relation to each other.

Dr. Palmer's book is therefore an interesting and informing one, so far as it goes. It does not deal with the scholastic questions of the book, nor with the detailed interpretation of the book. For the former one should read the articles upon the Apocalypse in the Hastings *Dictionary of the Bible*, and the *Encyclopædia Biblica*; for the latter one must go to the commentaries, especially those of Bousset (Meyer series) and Holtzmann (*Hand-Commentar* series); no first-class commentary in English has yet been written.

C. W. V.

La méthode historique surtout à propos de l'Ancien Testament.

By PÈRE MARIE-JOSEPH LAGRANGE. Paris, 1903. Pp. 220.

In the early days of the modern critical interest in Bible study, the scholarship of France led the way. The works of Richard Simon (1678) and Jean Astruc (1753), for example, were epoch-making. This pre-eminence, however, was speedily allowed to pass over to Germany and England, while Frenchmen concerned themselves with other matters. Only within quite recent years has there been any revival of interest in the historical investigation of the Scriptures. Of the leaders of this contemporaneous movement Père Lagrange has been one of the most scholarly and effective. The book under review contains six lectures delivered by him before the Catholic Institute of Toulouse in November, 1902. The lectures consider from various points of view the historical method of study, especially as it relates to the Old Testament. The special topics discussed are: (1) critical exegesis and ecclesiastical dogma; (2) the evolution of dogma, especially in the Old Testament; (3) the idea of inspiration, according to the biblical facts; (4) the historical method as applied to questions of science; (5) the historical